Why do I need a pacemaker?
You may need a pacemaker if you have one or more of the following:

- Bradycardia (slow heart rate) that causes dizziness, fainting spells, or fatigue.
- You have bradycardia with a very slow heart rate or long pauses even without symptoms.
- Your heart alternates between beating too fast and too slow (tachy-brady syndrome).
- Your heart rate does not rise as it should during physical activity, causing symptoms.
- You need to take certain medications, such as beta blockers for medical conditions. Such medicines may slow your heartbeat too much.
- You may have recurring fainting that is caused by severe slowing of your heart rate.

What is a pacemaker?
A pacemaker is a small lightweight electronic device, made of a battery and electronic circuitry sealed in a metal case. It is implanted under the skin, usually in the upper chest, near the left or right shoulder.

Pacemakers relieve symptoms of heart rhythm disturbances. They do this by restoring normal heart rates. A normal heart rate provides your body with the proper amount of blood circulation.

What is pacing lead?
A pacing lead is an insulated wire that connects to a pacemaker. This lead carries the electrical impulse from the pacemaker to the heart and also relays information about the heart’s natural activity back to the device.

How does a pacemaker work?
Two main functions:
1.) Keeps track of the hearts natural electrical activity, this is called sensing.
2.) Sends electrical impulses to the heart to make the heart beat, this is called pacing.

Types of pacemakers:
Single chamber pacemaker:
Has only one lead, placed in either the right atrium or the right ventricle, depending on the type of rhythm problem.

Dual chamber pacemaker:
Has two leads, one lead is placed in the right atrium, the other lead is placed in the right ventricle. This type of pacemaker can monitor and deliver impulses to both chambers. The impulses are timed to ensure the hearts upper and lower chambers beat in sync to help the heart beat more efficiently.

Biventricular pacemaker:
Also known as resynchronization, a biventricular pacemaker has three leads, one is placed in the atrium, one in the right ventricle, and one in the left ventricle. This type of pacemaker may help the ventricles pump more efficiently. This is used for patients who have congestive heart failure.
When do I call my doctor?

You should call your doctor if you experience any symptoms that you had before you received your pacemaker. Symptoms such as: lightheadedness, fainting spells, fatigue, palpitations, shortness of breath, or chest pain.

- Signs of infection: fever along with redness, swelling, warmth, soreness, or drainage at the incision site.
- If you experience twitching chest muscles or hiccups that will not stop.

Instructions for when you go home:

- Avoid lifting your arm above shoulder on the side of the incision for 3 weeks after surgery.
- Keep incision clean and dry.
- Monitor incision site for signs of infection.
- Keep all follow-up appointments with your physician and the device clinic.
- You will be mailed a special transmitter box, which is used to transmit pacemaker information from home.

How to prepare for pacemaker implantation

- Do not eat or drink for 6 hours prior to procedure.
- Bring a complete list of current medications with you.
- Bring an overnight bag, you will be spending the night.
- Take all of your current medications with a sip of water the morning of the procedure, except medications listed below:

If you are diabetic:

If you are on anti-coagulants:

Your pacemaker implant is scheduled:

Date: ____________________________

Location: ____________________________

Arrival time: ____________________________

Procedure Physician: ____________________________